



## MEETING SUMMARY

July 25, 2003

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, July 25, 2003, at the Medical Society of New Jersey headquarters in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by William Agress, Chair, who presided and declared a quorum present.

**ATTENDANCE** – Attached

### **WELCOME/CHAIR'S REPORT** - William Agress

1. The Chair welcomed those present. At his request, SICC members and public members *introduced themselves and their connection with early intervention.*
2. The Chair reported *two items of correspondence* since the May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting (attached to file copy of minutes): completion of the ICC Overview questionnaire (mailed 6/14) and a letter to Senator Stephen Sweeney, thanking him for his resolution and support in behalf of the Early Intervention System (see report below).
3. The Vice-Chair reported the *death of Claire Kantor*, executive director of the Summit Speech School, who was a long-time advocate of early intervention. The Council observed a moment of silence in her memory.
4. At the Chair's request, Celine Fortin reported on a *resolution introduced June 16<sup>th</sup> in the Senate by Senator Sweeney* at the instigation of the Coalition for Early Intervention Funding. Senator Sweeney, whose daughter went through the early intervention system, spoke of the importance of the program and his personal experience with it.
5. The Chair reported his conversations with the Governor's office on *Council vacancies*. It is anticipated that a legislative representative will be appointed in the near future. The Chair encouraged submission to him of potential parent-representative resumes for forwarding to the Governor's office.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The *minutes of the May 23, 2003 meeting* were unanimously approved as distributed – upon motion by Mary Lotze, seconded Annette Conklin and carried.

## SICC COMMITTEES

### 1. **Interagency** – Rose Annussek, Chair

Ms. Annussek distributed *minutes of three meetings* of her committee: *May 16, 2003, May 23, 2003, June 16* (attached to file copy of minutes). She highlighted some of the activities of these meetings as well as a meeting this morning. The committee will next meet September 19<sup>th</sup>.

### 2. **Systems Definition/Communication** – Toni Spiotta, Chair

Ms. Spiotta reported on committee activities discussed earlier this morning. They are moving ahead with the *SICC website and database*. The Council approved Ms. Spiotta's request that the recommendation proposed by her committee *in support of systems definition and* adopted by the Council at the 5/23/03 meeting *be referred to the Administrative Committee* for incorporation as a policy statement.

### 3. **Family Support** – Lauren Agoratus and Joseph Holahan, Co-Chairs

Ms. Agoratus and Dr. Holahan reported on the *meeting held earlier today* (Attachment #2, supplied by Ms. Agoratus).

### 4. **Administration** - No meeting

Susan Richmond asked for volunteers to serve on the *Budget Subcommittee*, which she chairs. Since only Mr. Agress volunteered, the Administrative Committee will take on this responsibility.

## LEAD AGENCY – DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

Celeste Andriot Wood, Assistant Commissioner, and Terry Harrison, Part C Coordinator

1. **Ms. Wood** reported briefly on *passage of the budget* with a line item \$1.5 million increase and use of Catastrophic Funds. The budget is stable and will cover current expenses.

2. **Ms. Harrison** reported on:

- \* new systems' changes which are moving ahead -- get out grants continued for six months; develop new letters for fee-for-service system (is optional for this year); new providers submitted intention to provide full service; request to the Treasury Department to have public bids for proposal of centralized billing and payment system as NJHSS moves into fee-for-service January 1, 2004.

- \* receipt of many inquiries into the letters of agreement process – some from new agencies that are familiar to REICs and/or NJDHSS; letters of agreement to service vendors.
- \* success of family-share billings and collections.
- \* NJDHSS website, which will now carry autism guidelines, procedural safeguard reports, state plan, family rights' booklet in English.
- \* addition of new staff Angela Drayton, with anticipated confirmation of another by September.
- \* progress of Physician Outreach (Training) Project; leadership planning group anticipates sessions this Fall in each of the four regions; provide custom manuals; finalize continuing education units.
- \* annual performance report (distributed and attached to file copy of minutes), indicating majority of contacts are children under one year and physicians are primary referral source.

3. **Autism Guidelines** - Susan Evans, Ed.D., Autism Project Specialist, EIS/NJDHSS

In a 30-minute presentation with question-and-answer session (copy of explanatory points distributed/attached to file copy of minutes), Susan Evans highlighted the new *Service Guidelines for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Birth to Three*, effective July 1, 2003. Also distributed (and attached to file copy of minutes) were the comprehensive Autism Guidelines manual and a report of the Committee on Educational Interventions for Children with Autism –June 13, 2001, “Educating Children with Autism - Salient Points for Early Intervention.”

Dr. Evans declared her *availability to give similar presentations* to other interested groups.

4. **Procedural Safeguards** – Beverly Rivell, Coordinator

Ms. Rivell reported that mediation sessions made it impossible for her to submit a *written quarterly report*. She announced it significant that in the past year only two cases required mediation; two other cases required hearings; all cases were amicably resolved. Currently there are four requests for mediation, which Ms. Rivell indicated will probably be resolved informally.

5. **Steering Committee 6/5/03 Meeting** – Toni Spiotta

Ms. Spiotta reported on her attendance at the June 5, 2003 Steering Committee meeting (distributed and attached to file copy of minutes). Council approved the *Steering Committee's request* – upon motion by Ms. Spiotta, seconded by Ms. Richmond and carried – *that the SICC sponsor and organize a one-day forum to build a fuller vision of “family support concept.”*

*Ms. Richmond agreed to chair an Ad Hoc Committee to organize the forum. The following volunteered to serve as ad hoc committee members: Lauren Agoratus (or Joseph Holahan), William Agress, Rose Annussek, Bonnie Bogdanoff, Patti Cicconi, Annette Conklin, Joyce Salzberg, Toni Spiotta.*

## REIC UPDATES – Jennifer Buzby

1. The four REIC directors agreed on the importance of data from *postcard surveys* and are now going to a Family Survey at specific times during the EIP process. They will conduct four surveys to gain family satisfaction/feedback on system procedures, each one sponsored by a specific REIC:
  - \* Intake and evaluation (for children not eligible) – given out by the TET
  - \* Intake/evaluation/family assessment/IFSP (for children not eligible) – given out by the service coordinator at the initial IFSP meeting.
  - \* Receiving services/family support – REICs to mail to families, contingent upon having an operational MIS system to tract this information.
  - \* Transition – mailed by the REICs 2-3 months after discharge from services.
2. Family support coordinators are drafting a letter to families around the *upcoming system changes*. Another letter is planned for mid-August.
3. REICs continue to field calls from parents regarding the *new autism guidelines* and provide ongoing technical assistance around the upcoming *system changes*.
4. Distributed (and attached to file copy of minutes) was a report from Susan Marcario outlining a joint *SICC/REIC retreat* to be held on Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup> (same day as regularly scheduled SICC meeting). The Council accepted the report -- including the morning session activity, time frame, facilitators -- with the following modifications:
  - \* Joint retreat will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at MSNJ headquarters.
  - \* The retreat theme will be “system change.”
  - \* The retreat will not be a public meeting; SICC committees will not meet that day, but were urged to meet at another time.
  - \* The SICC retreat/section will be covered at a “working lunch.”
  - \* Sharon Walsh will serve as facilitator.
  - \* Dress will be casual.

Chair Agress will work with the REIC directors to *implement the retreat logistics*.

## INTERAGENCY UPDATES

Barbara Gantwerk reported:

- \* A *student database system* will pilot next year and could be helpful in following children in the early intervention system.
- \* *Autism document* is being finalized and will flow from the early intervention document.
- \* “*No child left behind*” will be the focus of, and have impact on, special education.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Spiotta highlighted *two meetings* she attended (distributed and attached to file copy of minutes):

- \* Early Intervention System Regulations Workgroup – April 3, 2003
- \* OSEP Summer Institute: Continuous Improvement/Focused Monitoring – July 17-18, 2003  
in Baltimore, Maryland

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Chair Agres reported that the SICC *exceeded its budget this year* with the printing/mailing of the annual report. He asked for guidance to propose a \$5,000 increase for FY'05. Ms. Wood suggested the Chair write a letter to Ms. Harrison, with decision for an increase determined after the January 2004 collection payment.

**ADJOURNMENT** – 1:00 p.m.

*NOTE: There were no items for Old Business or Public Comment.*

**APPROVED**  
**11/21/03**